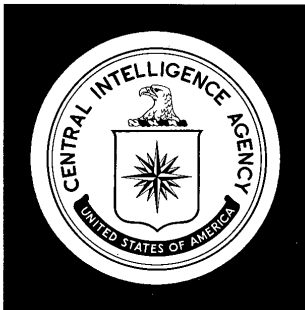




The President's Daily Brief

29 March 1972

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Soviet

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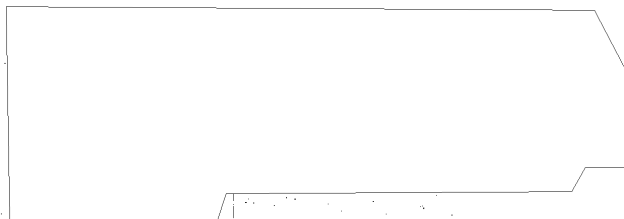
There now are a number of indications that private reactions around the Arab world to King Husayn's West Bank proposal are less hostile than public positions have been. (Page 3)

The Panamanians can be expected to continue their tough negotiating stance at the canal talks and may bring the matter before the UN and OAS if the talks remain at an impasse. (Page 4)

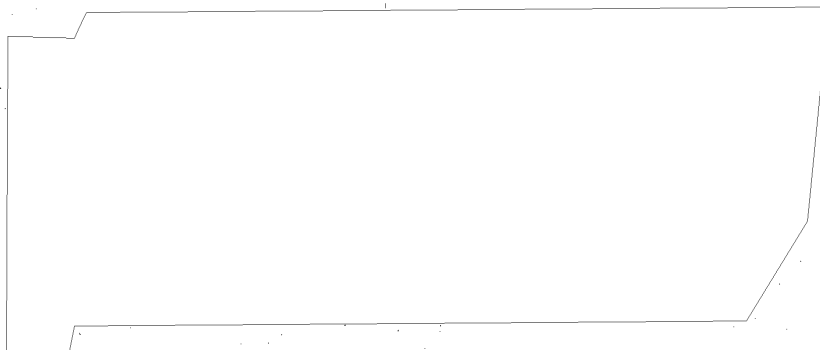
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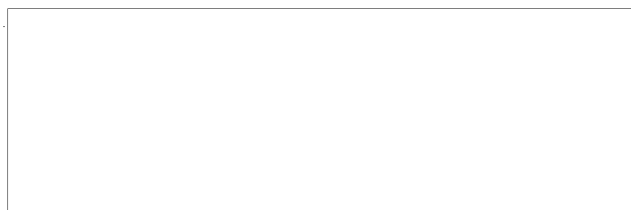
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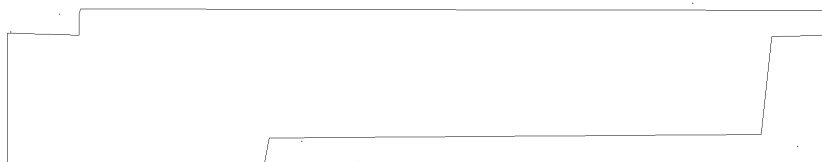
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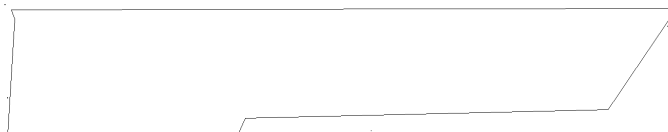
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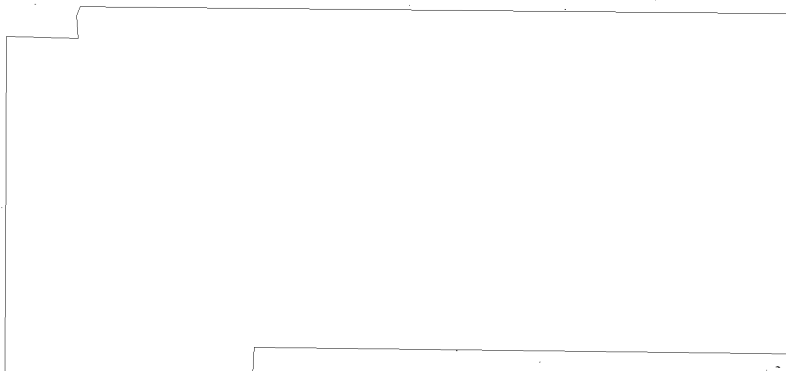
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ARAB STATES

We have a number of indications that officials in the Arab nations are less hostile toward King Husayn's West Bank proposal than their public positions would indicate.

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In Saudi Arabia, one of the states refraining from public denunciation, officials have told Ambassador Thatcher that they have no objection to the plan but believe it might have been more palatable if coordinated first with Egypt. Lebanese officials have privately told the US Embassy that they view the plan as a clever move which has embarrassed the fedayeen and which, they hope, will raise Husayn's stock with West Bankers. Similar private comments have been made by Sudan's President Numayri and by the Algerian envoys in Amman and Beirut.

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The restrained private reaction:

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will serve to keep the King's plan alive, at least for the near term. The virulent public denunciations of the plan by the fedayeen and by such states as Libya and Iraq, however, inhibit Egypt, Algeria, and other states publicly pledged to support the fedayeen from taking any steps favorable to Husayn's plan. On the other hand, Husayn may have succeeded in generating some thinking among moderate Arabs about alternative solutions to the Palestinian problem. Husayn has also forced a grudging acknowledgment in the Arab world that his opposition to fedayeen anarchy within his own kingdom does not equate with opposition to Palestinian aspirations for at least regional autonomy in their own homeland.

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PANAMA

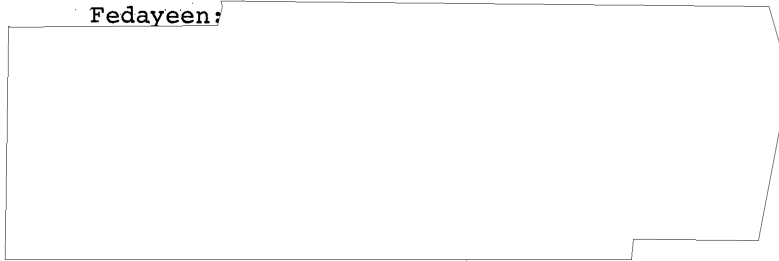
General Torrijos continues to lack confidence in his canal negotiators. He recently sent his senior foreign policy adviser, Ambassador Illueca, to Washington to assess the US position on a treaty. Illueca returned dissatisfied with the progress of the negotiations and expressed the need for the US to reformulate its proposals to take Panamanian aspirations into account. He also stressed the desirability of a change of venue from Washington to Panama.

Foreign Minister Tack shares Illueca's view that the US will ultimately yield to pressure. Tack will undoubtedly press for a continuation of Panama's hard negotiating line, especially in view of his anger over recent press allegations that he is involved in narcotics traffic. Tack may still believe that these reports are part of a US Government attempt to discredit him because of his tough stance on the talks. The foreign minister will probably encourage Torrijos to publicize the canal issue and bring the matter before the UN and the OAS if the talks remain stalemated.

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NOTE

Fedayeen:



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